Turkey: An Avoidable Problem

WASHINGTON — A massive, backstage lobbying effort by President Ford, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and CIA director William Colby failed to persuade Congress to restore arms aid to Turkey.

And they have no one to blame but themselves. For behind the scenes, congressional leaders gave the Administration every possible chance to avoid the embarrassing vote.

The problem began more than a year ago when the Turks used U.S.-supplied weapons to overrun Cyprus. This was a violation of American law. So last February Congress voted to embargo arms shipments to Turkey.

Ford and Kissinger mounted a major lobbying effort to reverse the vote. Hundreds of congressmen were invited to breakfast at the White House. Others were asked to have "Cocktails with Henry."

CIA director William Colby was dispatched to Capitol Hill with armloads of secret documents to demonstrate that our intelligence bases in Turkey were crucial to national security.

Colby showed key congressmen photos of Soviet ships steaming through the Bosporus Straits. The pictures were an example, he said, of the vital information gleaned by the intelligence installations.

But all the arm-twisting was for naught. The House soundly defeated a measure which would have reopened the arms assistance pipeline to Ankara. The Turks subsequently announced they were taking control of the two dozen military and intelligence bases in their country.

This might have been avoided if President Ford and Secretary of State Kissinger had been willing to get tough with the Turks.

Cong. Ben Rosenthal, D-N.Y., John Brademas, D-Ind., and Paul Sarbanes, D-Md., met repeatedly with Ford and Kissinger to urge them to extract a sign from the Turks that they were willing to negotiate for a Cyprus solution. The lawmakers even indicated that they were willing to accept private assurance from the Ankara government.

For months, however, Ford and Kissinger stubbornly assured the Turks they could convince Congress to renew the arms flow.

When they finally realized they could not deliver on their promise, it was too late.

DECONTROL FALLOUT: The game of political "chicken" that President Ford and Congress have been playing over oil prices is ending in a head-on collision. And the gas-buying public is the loser.

It now appears that oil prices will be decontrolled at the end of August. This means a drastic jump in the price of a gallon of gas.

The end of the allocation law will also allow the major oil companies to squeeze out independent dealers. The giants can cut off the gas supply to the cut-rate stations or simply underprice them until they go out of business.

Two or three companies also will be able to consolidate their stations in one geographic area, and share the market. They simply pull out of other areas, reducing the competition. Gulf and Arco, for example, are expected to pull out of the Midwest and concentrate on the East Coast. While Phillips leaves the East Coast and Amoco leaves the West in favor of the Midwest.

The end of controls, therefore, will do more than raise prices this year. It will make the industry even more concentrated, and assure higher prices for years to come.

FUN IN THE SUN: The summer junketing season has just opened. Here is a report on where your congressmen will spend their August vacations.

• Twenty-one congressmen and their aides are flying to Taiwan at the expense of a mysterious foundation. The junketeers may be violating the law because the trip apparently is underwritten, indirectly, by the Nationalist Chinese Government.

• Similarly, Mainland China is hosting a delegation of four senators and three congressmen. The legislators will tour China for two weeks.

• House Speaker Carl Albert is leading another group of almost two dozen congressmen to Russia, Yugoslavia and Romania.

• The House Armed Services Committee is sending groups to Micronesia and Guam, as well as to the Caribbean and the Panama Canal Zone.

Still other senators and congressmen are on the move throughout Europe, Asia and Africa. The taxpayers, of course, foot the bill for most of the travel.

WASHINGTON WHIRL: President Ford's plan to campaign against the big spenders in Congress is being felt on Capitol Hill now. The President's men are taking a hands-off attitude on spending legislation. Rather than hammering out a compromise proposal in Congress, the Republicans are letting the expensive bills go through for President Ford to veto. In 1976, he can point to his veto record as proof of his commitment to hold the line on spending...Not all lobbyists are highly paid minions of the special interests. Sen. Walter Mondale, D-Minn., was recently buttonholed by a deliveryman on an elevator...Battling Bella Abzug, D-N.Y., is getting a taste of her own medicine these days. Known for her acid tongue, Rep. Abzug is on the receiving end of some caustic comments from colleagues concerning her run for the Senate...The partisan fight over who will represent New Hampshire in the Senate has frayed some long-standing bipartisan friendships. The result may be less cooperation between the parties on the Senate side of the Capitol.

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WASHINGTON Merry-Go-Round

THE GAITHERSBURG GAZETTE

By Jack Anderson and Les Whitten